

PROGRAM: Fulton Lewis, Jr.

FULTON LEWIS, JR.: "Senator Barry Goldwater, the Republican conservative leader from Arizona, today introduced a resolution calling for a full and impartial investigation of the Bay of Pigs Cuban invasion fiasco, and said it is obvious that the President and the administration has not told the public the full truth about the affair. The resolution provides that the investigation be made by the Armed Services Committee, the Chairman of which is Senator Richard Russell of Georgia. Senator Goldwater said that such an investigation is the only way the American people can be fully informed of the circumstances surrounding the invasion effort of April, 1961, and he said the investigation becomes mandatory in view of the recent statement by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, in a newspaper interview, when he said that the United States never promised or planned to provide any air cover for the invasion attempt.

"Senate Republican leader Everett Dirksen proposed yesterday that if a regular committee investigation is not held, that the Republican Policy Committee conduct an investigation of its own, but this was immediately under attack, even by some Republicans who said that such an investigation would put a partisan slant on the invasion disaster. Senator Goldwater suggested that General Lyman Lemnitzer, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Allen Dulles, former Director of the CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, be called to testify. Senator Wayne Morse, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Latin America, rose to say that before any particular anti-partisan speeches were made on the subject, Senators should read the secret testimony taken by the Foreign Relations Committee. He said statements by both Lemnitzer and Dulles were in the transcript. Senator Goldwater said that he had read that testimony, but in his opinion it was inconclusive, particularly on the specific point of whether or not air cover-- U. S. air cover was ever promised or planned.

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"Senator Goldwater said, quote, 'It is true President Kennedy manfully accepted all the blame for the Bay of Pigs fiasco, but it is also true that he never gave the American people a true account of what had been planned, and what actually occurred.' Now, after all this time, we get from the Attorney General, an account which defies belief, and runs counter to everything the American people had been led to believe, and contradicts the understanding of almost every man engaged in the abortive invasion attempts. He said no one in his right mind could believe that 1500 men could succeed in an invasion of Cuba, and the Attorney General's recent statement cast grave doubts on the ability of the American military establishments. It has been stated categorically that the invasion plans were cleared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff before they were withdrawn under the President's orders.

"Senator Goldwater said the invasion was fore-doomed to failure, without air protection, and that therefore the Attorney General's statement had left the public in a state of confusion as to the true facts.

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"Armed Services Committee Chairman Russell said that he has an open mind on the inquiry, although he sees no particular need for rehashing what he called a very humiliating experience in our national life. However, he said he did not oppose an inquiry if it would serve the national interest. He said he has not read the recent interview with Attorney General Kennedy, although he has discussed the Bay of Pigs incident with the President and others, and has looked into it in closed-door sessions of the Senate's special CIA Subcommittee. He added, with a note of sharpness, it's a little difficult for me to see what the Attorney General had to do with the Bay of Pigs, because he had no role in the affair in his official capacity. I don't see what useful purpose it serves to re-laundry all this linen, though I'll confess that it never did seem to be real clean.

"Chairman Russell suggested that Goldwater could achieve much of the purpose of this inquiry by questioning witnesses in the forthcoming hearings of the Armed Services Committee on the nation's military posture. Senator Goldwater is a member of that committee; Senator Russell said the hearings, starting as soon as the Senate rules fight is over, will include testimony from Defense Secretary McNamara, John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The difficulty with that, however, is that the only information those witnesses have is what they have gained indirectly. Neither of them was in office at the time of the invasion effort, and neither of them has any first-hand

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information on the question at hand.

"Senator Russell said the regular forthcoming hearings would not normally call General Lemnitzer or Allen Dulles, but that if Senator Goldwater makes a formal motion for the inquiry, he-- Senator Russell as Chairman--will put it to a vote. Senator Russell said he thinks he has a pretty clear picture of what happened on April 16, 1961, from discussing it next day with the President, from discussions with General Maxwell Taylor, now Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and from five hours of testimony before the CIA Subcommittee. He said there probably are some details that have not yet been exhausted, but he doubts whether it would serve any useful purpose to go into them.

"As to whether air support was or was not promised, Senator Russell said, quote, 'I don't think there is any doubt that the people who made the invasion thought that they had air cover arranged. Otherwise they wouldn't have committed 1500 men to such a venture. The only question is whether the promised air cover was to be provided by regular U. S. forces, or whether it was CIA air cover of the type that supplied the bombing raid on Havana before the invasion.' That's the end of the quote. I might interject here that I can testify personally that the Cuban refugees were told by the CIA that the invasion force would have air cover, and that the Navy expected to provide air cover, up to the last minute, because I happen to know that the Deputy Director of the CIA Pearre Cabell went personally to the White House twice on the night when the decision was being made, and pleaded with the President and others not to withdraw the air cover. So what kind of air cover it was, it doesn't make any difference. There was some kind of air power promised, and the invasion was made in the expectation of having it, and that air cover was withdrawn at the last minute, the Attorney General to the contrary notwithstanding.

"Senator Goldwater said, I certainly feel that it is long past the time when every official report bearing on the invasion attempt should be made public. I for one am not content to accept as gospel the highly colored account of the Bay of Pigs story as offered by the Attorney General. It strikes me as one of the most deliberate and flagrant uses of the news management devices yet attempted by the Kennedy administration. For, under the guise of news, the Attorney General was engaged in a massive readjustment

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of facts in sending the invasion attempt to place the New Frontier in a better light. This is plainly and simply a clean-up operation in public relations to make the worst mistake of the President's career seem like something entirely different. The account of the Attorney General's explanation contained numerous indications that Mr. Kennedy's whole Bay of Pigs story was as superficial as it was erroneous.

"For example, he says that the plan used in the invasion was planned at the Pentagon in whatever manner they do these things. Now it strikes me that the Attorney General, one of the two men appointed by the President to study the whole invasion failure should by this time know in detail how the Pentagon goes about programming any military operation. In another instance the Attorney General says one of the major mistakes in the American plan was the role played by three or four T-33 jet trainers in the hands of the Castro forces. The administration underestimated what a T-33 carrying rockets could do. They caused us a great deal of trouble. Senator Goldwater said he doesn't know how the invasion was programmed at the Pentagon, and apparently neither does the Attorney General, but it seems to be a very strange thing indeed if anyone involved in the plan could have been surprised at what a T-33 jet trainer carrying rockets could do, or could not do. He says that anyone connected with Air Force training could have supplied the information on a moment's notice.

"The Senator said we have to recognize why the T-33's played such an important part in the Attorney General's post mortem. The motivation quite plainly was political. The purpose is to attach a major portion of the blame for the invasion fiasco at the feet of the Eisenhower administration. If you read the story carefully, you will find the statement that the planes were given to former Dictator Batista and inherited by Castro. This of course had to happen before the New Frontier came to power--that is the end of Senator Goldwater's statement.

"For my part, I frankly don't believe Attorney General Kennedy's story, and there is no reason to believe it from an administration which frankly admits that it is part of the administration's right and policy to lie to the press when the lie will serve the best interests of the administration. I know that when I was reporting to you from Miami, in advance of the invasion, telling you about the training of the invasion brigade and the part the CIA was taking

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in the whole thing. I was told by the Cuban refugee leaders that there had been air support promised, and naval support too. And I know for a fact that an aircraft carrier was lying off the Bay of Pigs, ready to launch planes at the time of the invasion, but that orders came from Washington not to let the planes take off."

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